

With **SNOW** in the forecast for this weekend, I thought it would be a good time to send out our next winter activity.



Sledding down snowy hillsides on a plastic tube or disc is a favorite winter [activity](#) of children around the world. But why limit it to children? It is a great way even for [ADULTS](#) to get out and enjoy the crisp, cool air. And it's basically a [free](#) sport. Grab a sled, find any hill without obstacles and you're good to go!

There are a lot of benefits to sledding that make it a great winter activity. Trekking up the hill can be a great [cardio](#) workout and [tone](#) the leg muscles. Of course, the harder you work on your way uphill, the more you benefit you receive. So find a [steep](#) hill for more sledding fun as well as a more beneficial workout.

There are a lot of side advantages to sledding, as well.

It is a lot of fun and makes you [laugh](#), which in itself has great physiological *and* mental benefits!

- Laughter relaxes the whole body. A good, hearty laugh relieves physical tension and stress, leaving your muscles relaxed for up to 45 minutes after.
- Laughter boosts the immune system. Laughter decreases stress hormones and increases immune cells and infection-fighting antibodies, thus improving your resistance to disease.
- Laughter triggers the release of endorphins, the body's natural feel-good chemicals. Endorphins promote an overall sense of well-being and can even temporarily relieve pain.
- Laughter protects the heart. Laughter improves the function of blood vessels and increases blood flow, which can help protect you against a heart attack and other cardiovascular problems.

The [cold crisp air](#) in the sun also does much for your body, spirit and overall attitude!



- Cold air on your body during the winter communicates valuable and appropriate information to your genes so that your body steps up to the demand.
- Being outdoors for at least part of the day helps reset circadian rhythms (circadian rhythms refer to your unique body rhythms of waking and sleeping in sync with the rising and the setting of the sun)



Please be sure, however, to take [safety](#) precautions (and use some common sense – sleds are not intended to be dragged behind cars, and can become deadly even at slow speeds!) when sledding.

- Wear a hat to keep hold your body heat, as well as gloves or mittens and boots.
- Sunscreen is still important; even though the sun may not seem as intense in the winter, it still affects you in the same way as, for example, walking along the beach on a summer day, with the reflection off the bright white snow. Protect your skin and lips with SPF 15 balm.
- Slopes should be clear of obstacles and not end near a roadway.

And while you're out playing in the snow, why not make some *snow angels*, have a **snowball fight**, make a *Snowman*...sometimes it's good to be a kid again!

